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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

MONDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES

BRIEFING

EDITORIAL OPINION

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HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Bush: Each Vote Cast in Iraq a Blow to Terrorism - Milliyet  
10/16

Time for Democracy in Iraq - Hurriyet 10/16

Rice Officially Invites 'TRNC's Talat to US - Turkiye 10/16

Initial Results Show Iraq Constitution Approved - Vatan

Aziz to Testify against Saddam - Sabah

Aziz to String Up Saddam - Vatan

5 US Troops Killed in Ramadi - Milliyet

Al-Qaida's 'Image-Maker' Captured in Baghdad - Vatan

Iran Develops 3,500 km Range Missiles - Milliyet

Europe within Range of Mullahs - Vatan

'Black Fury' in Ohio - Aksam

Condi to Challenge Hillary in 2008 - Aksam

Afghanistan to Officially Recognize Israel - Sabah

OPINION MAKERS

Rice Confident of Iraq Constitution Approval - Yeni Safak

Shiites Vote 'Yes,' Sunnis 'No' on Iraq Constitution -

Cumhuriyet

US Planes Strike Ramadi: 25 Killed - Yeni Safak

Russia Provides Iran Missile Technology - Zaman

Putin Denies Rice Support on Iran - Zaman 10/16

Damascus Refuses to Cooperate with US - Radikal

Pakistan Earthquake Death Toll 38,000 - Zaman 10/16

Rebuilding Pakistan May Take 10 Years - Zaman

Russians Train Palestinian Security Forces - Yeni Safak

Nalchik Raid Ends in Bloodbath: 108 Killed - Zaman 10/15

Germany's 'Grand Coalition' Won't Work - Cumhuriyet

BRIEFING

Iraq Constitution Has Likely Been Approved: "Milliyet" reports that, based on preliminary counting in the Iraqi constitutional referendum, the Iraqi constitution has likely been approved. The paper claims that nearly 70 percent of votes cast in the Sunni-majority provinces of Tikrit and al-Anbar were against the Constitution. However, large majorities in two other Sunni-dominated provinces, Diyala and Nineveh, voted to support the document. Opponents had therefore fallen short of the three-province threshold required to reject the constitution. All papers note that voter turnout in Sunni areas was surprisingly high - over 66 percent in many critical regions. "Milliyet" claims that Kurds and Shiites voted overwhelmingly in favor of ratification.

Hughes on Her Regional Tour in September: Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Karen Hughes said she heard 'strong opinions' during her regional tour of Afghanistan, Egypt, and Turkey last month, Turkish papers reported on Saturday. Responding to questions following her speech at George Washington University, Hughes said that since she had expected to hear strong opinions, she had not been 'taken aback,' as some have suggested. 'I'm not surprised that I met with a number of very active women in Turkey -- activist, opinionated, strong-willed, forceful women - and that some of them disagreed with our decision to go into Iraq. I suspect that if I met with a similar group in the United States, I would probably hear the same thing. I understand that there are a number of people who disagree with our decision to go in to remove Saddam Hussein from power,' Hughes said.

US Funds for a Cooperation Project with Turkey: Rifat Hisarciklioglu, Chairman of the Turkish Union of Chambers (TOBB), said after meeting with the US Charge d'Affaires Nancy McEldowney that Turkey wants to further bilateral trade with the United States, the semi-official Anatolian News Agency (AA) reported over the weekend. McEldowney said that the US Government will donate 500,000 USD to support

cooperation between small and medium-scale enterprises in Turkey and the US. The project will be carried out by TOBB and the US Chamber of Commerce, according to the AA report.

Al-Jazeera Interviews FM Gul: Doha-based Al-Jazeera TV hosted Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul on its weekly program 'Without Borders' broadcast last week from Ankara. Responding to a question about Iraq and the Middle East, Gul said the Turkish Parliament had rejected a US proposal to open a northern front against Iraq, and that Turkey had expressed 'strong and courageous' criticism to Israel. Gul said Turkey's objective is to contribute to achieving a lasting peace between Palestine and Israel, and between Israel and the Arab world. Gul noted that the Iraqi Constitution is an issue to be decided by the Iraqi people, stressing the need to maintain Iraq's unity. 'Had the Sunnis been fully represented in the committee that drafted the constitution, a better constitution would have been produced,' Gul said. He nevertheless urged the Sunnis to seek greater involvement in the political process. Gul noted that Arab countries neighboring Iraq are worried about developments there and seek to help Iraq. Asked about northern Iraq, Gul said that the Turks have not been enemies of the Kurds. He said that the PKK is a terrorist group that will eventually harm Iraq as well. 'The Kurdish issue is not the only problem in Turkey. The solution to all our problems lies in expanding democracy here,' Gul added. On whether Turkey has a 'secret agenda' in Iraq, Gul said that Turkey wants to see a genuinely democratic state that would benefit all Iraqis. Responding to a question on a possible US attack against Syria, Gul said he did not believe the US is planning to wage war against Damascus. 'It's against Turkey's interests. We don't want another war in the region. What has happened in Iraq is enough, because it has harmed all of us,' Gul stressed. With regard to the role of Turkey as a bridge between East and West following the opening of EU accession talks with Ankara, Gul said that Turkey has always had been influential in the region. 'Europe is an important international force that has interests in the region. So the EU process will enable Turkey to play a bigger role in the region,' Gul said.

Grossman on US-Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria: Former US Undersecretary of State Marc Grossman, speaking at a conference on the issue of Turkish-US relations, predicted that the bilateral relationship may undergo a new 'test' on the issue of Iran, Saturday's "Zaman" reports. Grossman said Turkey and the US had 'common interests' with regard to the democratization of Iran and Syria. 'It is in Turkey's interest that Iran not acquire nuclear weapons. We also have a common view that Iran must not export terror. Consultations in a more strategic sense may enable us to pass this test,' Grossman said, adding that Turkey must try to convince Tehran not to acquire nuclear weapons. Grossman said that Syria is not as urgent an issue as Iran, but noted that it is possible to achieve a more democratic Syria that does not support terrorism. Grossman argued that the PKK presence in northern Iraq must be removed if anti-Americanism in Turkey is to be brought to an end. He stressed that Turkey and the US must work together to reach the goal of a united Iraq that is politically and economically stable.

HRW Concerned About Lack of Freedom of Expression in Turkey: In a letter to Turkish Justice Minister Cemil Cicek, Human Rights Watch (HRW) urged the Government to make Turkish judges and prosecutors who restrict freedom of expression understand that the human rights agreements signed by Turkey had become part of national law, Monday's "Yeni Safak" reports. The letter expressed concern over the charges filed against novelist Orhan Pamuk and the prosecutor's decision to use force to bring Pamuk to the courtroom. HRW also drew attention to similar cases against "Agos" editor Hrant Dink, publisher Ragip Zarkolu, Mazlum-Der vice-chairman Sehmus Ulek, and journalists Rahmi Yildirim and Ersen Korkmaz. HRW noted that the new penal code still contains provisions that infringe freedom of expression.

Avian Flu under Control in Turkey: The Turkish Ministry of Health announced that the bird flu outbreak in the Manyas near the Aegean Sea has exceeded its incubation period and that it is no longer dangerous. Some 10,000 birds were culled in Manyas, and a quarantine in the region continues. The Ministry asked its officials around Turkey to report any further detection of avian flu. The European Commission is to send a group of experts to Turkey to investigate the situation. A spokesman for the Commission said that EU experts are discussing precautionary measures against avian flu, which could spread from the Balkans to the West. The European Commission representative in Turkey, Hansjoerg Kretschmer, said that there is no need for panic. Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan assured the nation that all measures are being taken to prevent the spread of the disease. 'There is not a single case of bird flu diagnosed in a human being in Turkey,' Erdogan stressed. The Council of Ministers is to discuss the avian flu outbreak at its monthly meeting today.

**Turkish Aid to Pakistan Earthquake Victims:** On October 20, Prime Minister Erdogan is to take a check for 22 million USD in assistance to victims of the earthquake in Pakistan. The money has been collected from businessmen in Istanbul, Monday papers report. Turkey will also send 50,000 tons of flour, as well as vegetable oil and sugar to the region over the next 10 days.

**MFA Condemns Terror in Nalchik:** In a statement released on Friday, the Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) condemned the acts of terrorism that took place in Nalchik, the capital of the mainly Muslim autonomous republic of Kabardino-Balkariya in Russia, weekend papers report. The MFA expressed 'profound sorrow' over the loss of civilian lives in clashes between Russian security forces and terrorists. At least 85 people, including 61 attackers, were reportedly killed during the fighting in Nalchik.

**Bomb Explosion at a Gas Station in Istanbul:** An explosion at a gas station in Istanbul's Maslak neighborhood on Saturday evening that injured five people was caused by a remote-controlled bomb planted in a car, police said on Sunday. Police say they believe the outlawed PKK is responsible for the bombing.

#### EDITORIAL OPINION: Iraq

**"Gaining Time in Iraq"**  
Ferai Tinc observed in the mass appeal "Hurriyet" (10/16): "The approval of the Iraq constitution is part of the Bush administration's strategy to get out of Iraq. This has been a slow, phased process, but so far the Iraqi government has not gained much authority outside the US-controlled green line. The Iraqis are still suffering from instability, and they are still living in fear. The daily problems they face are not ending, but are in fact growing. Despite President Bush's rhetoric about fighting terrorists in Iraq, the obvious reality indicates that this is a war of interests between Kurds, Shiites, and Sunni Arabs. The occupation forces do not have control over this war. . The two most influential elements in Iraq are the Kurds and the Shiites. They used to work together in efforts to topple Saddam Hussein. Today, these two groups are again in an alliance, but this time it is in an effort to divide Iraq step by step. It remains to be seen whether the constitutional process will be successful in forging a consensus with the Sunnis. But it is certain that this process at least gained everybody in Iraq some time, including the US."

**"Supporters of the War and the Iraq Referendum"**  
Yasemin Congar wrote from Washington in the mainstream "Milliyet" (10/17): "The Iraq referendum took place at a time when President Bush's popularity and support for the war in Iraq is at an all-time low. But the last-minute consensus forged among the Iraqi groups, largely through US pressure, has become good news for the White House. It has prevented the referendum process from turning into a defeat for the Bush administration. The number of loyal supporters of the Iraq war in Washington has been dwindling for some time. This narrow circle considers the referendum as a sign of potential success for the Iraq mission. . Both the pessimistic and optimistic observers in Washington have one thing in common: they believe the referendum process, including the upcoming general elections set for December 15, is part of the American strategy to get out of Iraq. The only differences they have relate to the timing and specifics of a pullout."

MCELDOWNEY